

Integrated Strategy Newsletter



March 2012
Volume 1, Issue 2

Kentucky Department of Education

Special Interest Articles

Page 1: *Integration Partners*
— *Prichard Committee*

Page 2: *LDC/MDC Pilot Study*

Page 3: *Cross-State Learning Collaborative*

Page 4: *Spotlight on an Integrated Strategy District: Fleming County*

Page 6: *Calendar Items*

Page 7: *MDC Feature*



District Integration Project Leads collaborate in a communications session at the Cross-State Learning Collaborative meeting in Denver, Colo.

Changing the Learning Culture

By Cindy Heine, Prichard Committee

Changing the learning culture was the focus for educators who came together to share information about implementing new classroom strategies around the Common Core State Standards. The educators, who convened in early February in Lexington, represented school districts that have been awarded continuation grants for Mathematics and Literacy Design Collaboratives as well as those identified last summer to begin integrating the collaborative work with the educator effectiveness strategies.

Participants included administrators from nine continuation and 12

integration districts. The agenda was structured to allow those experienced with the strategies to share information with those who are newer to the work.

The Mathematics Design Collaborative groups heard from Ann Shannon of Ann Shannon & Associates, who provided information on the use of rigorous formative assessment lessons created by the Shell Centre at the University of Nottingham, England. These lessons require that students delve into a 'productive struggle' to learn key mathematical concepts. Participants shared from their direct experience, and all

agreed that using the lessons changes the learning culture from one of giving students formulas and answers to one that guides them as they think through problems. Although students may complain that their teacher won't help them, Shannon pointed out that helping or 'GPSing' them doesn't allow the students to develop the deeper understanding they need.

Participants also heard from Julia Phelan, senior research associate at the Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards and Student Testing, and Nancy Lawrence, senior research associate at Research for Action.

(cont. on pg. 2)



“Provide science and social studies teachers with additional support to locate rich, high content texts at appropriate reading levels and with strategies for providing feedback on student writing.”

Recommendations from Pilot Report

Research for Action is providing an external evaluation of the Literacy and Mathematics Design Collaborative initiatives. Based on results of the pilot year study, the group has provided recommendations for participating districts.

Recommendations for the Literacy Initiative

- Continue providing teachers with robust professional development, focused on building their expertise in developing modules.
- Provide science and social studies teachers with additional support to locate rich, high-

content texts at appropriate reading levels and with strategies for providing feedback on student writing.

- Provide support for teachers to develop their facility in using insights from module instruction to inform ongoing teaching.
- Work with educators in specific sites to help them resolve conflicts they articulate between the modules and existing curricula, rubrics or state assessments.

Recommendations for the Math Initiative

- Provide teachers with packaged sets of lessons to decrease the preparation time for FAL use.
- Provide teachers with more direction about how to group students and arrange seating during the collaborative activity.
- Facilitate more discussion about both formative assessment strategies and how to instructionally respond to the information collected from tasks.

(cont. on pg. 3)

Changing *(cont. from pg. 1)*

Carl Swartz, senior analyst for research and development at MetaMetrics, Inc., presented an online program that allows teachers to design LDC modules with greater ease. Participants were excited about sharing these strategies with their teachers. Marilyn Crawford and Mary Rudd facilitated discussions on lessons learned and obstacles faced by the more-experienced districts as they continue to learn about these strategies. One participant said the panel discussion helped in making it clear to first-year partners that teachers will have a learning curve with the new strategies. Others appreciated the sharing among districts about implementation. Crawford also facilitated the group as it looked at the Teacher Professional Growth and Effective System framework and considered how the LDC framework can be used to support effective teaching.

A second convening will be held June 5 to continue the conversations.

Teaching and Learning at its Best Showcase

The second Teaching and Learning at its Best Showcase has been scheduled for June 4 in Lexington. Last summer, policymakers, educators, higher education faculty members and advocates from Kentucky and other states came together to learn about LDC/MDC directly from teachers piloting these new strategies. Participants were enthused about what they experienced and heard. Prichard Committee Executive Director Stu Silberman said he'd not seen or heard teachers this excited about new teaching methodologies in many years. The second showcase is scheduled to share the strategies more widely and to learn about the integrated strategy for educator effectiveness work. The events have been organized by the Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence with support from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and in partnership with the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE).

“The only way we're going to get to excellence in public education is to teach our way there. We need to be able to define and measure what makes great teaching.”

- Pete Gorman,
Superintendent,
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools

Recommendations

(cont. from pg. 2)

- Develop and support principal involvement in and knowledge of the initiatives to preserve tool use in schools.
- Involve practitioners in sharing learning and best practices across sites after the pilot year ends.

Based on participant surveys, 92 percent found the literacy tools a good fit for their curriculum, and 94 percent found the Formative Assessment Lessons for mathematics a good fit.

To read the full report, visit
http://www.mygrouppgenius.org/files/comments/CCSS_Literacy_and_Math_Tools_-_RFA_Interim_Report_3-4-11.pdf.

Link to Thomas Kane's podcast on MET study:
<http://www.gse.harvard.edu/news-impact/2012/03/harvard-edcast-the-great-teacher-checklist/>

Cross-State Learning Collaborative

In Denver, Colo. on February 23-24, district partners in KDE's Integrated Strategy for Educator Effectiveness met with their peers from Colorado and Louisiana as well as with KDE leads and other external partners to learn together about what “Integration” means and how to strengthen communication, both internally and externally, about the work.

Sessions started with a “Meeting Your Integration Peers” conversation, followed by “Understanding Integration.” Planning time focused on state strategy discussion, facilitated by Arabella & Associates consultants. The Kentucky team brainstormed problems of practice related to the work and selected two problems, which served as the focus for Day 2 learning.

On April 16, the Kentucky team will meet again to follow up and plan next steps related to the discussions from the Denver convening.

Districts can access the Cross-State Learning Collaborative resource center at
<http://www.csllaborative.com>.

The district access page is
Kentucky_district@csllaborative.com.

The Online Resource Center is a component of the Cross-State Learning Collaborative, a knowledge-sharing network designed to enhance and support the work of Integration Grant recipients in Kentucky, Colorado and Louisiana. If you would like to submit or request a document for this center, have a general question about the CSLC or are having technical issues with the Online Resource Center, please e-mail
CSLCinfo@arabellaadvisors.com.

Integration Districts

Daviess County	Jessamine County	Magoffin County
Fleming County	Jefferson County	Owen County
Gallatin County	Kenton County	Simpson County
Jackson Independent	Lee County	Washington County

Inside an Integration District: Spotlight on Fleming County



Before applying for the Integration Grant, Fleming County had developed a three-year implementation plan for Unbridled Learning. This plan included the creation of a District Network Leadership Team (DNLT) composed of all principals, ELA and Math Network teachers representing all six schools, and district ISN network administrators. The district participated in Year One of KDE's Professional Growth and Evaluation Pilot for Teacher Effectiveness and is participating in both the Teacher and Principal Effectiveness Pilot in Year Two.

Once Fleming County was named as one of the Integration districts, we integrated the I TEAM teachers into the DNLT. I TEAM members include math, ELA, science, social studies and special education teachers from Simons Middle School and Fleming County High School, as well as principals, instructional coaches and district administrators. With the guidance of their Effectiveness Coach, Neely Traylor, they immediately took steps to increase the leadership capacity of the I TEAM, as they joined ASCD and began PLC conversations around *Educational Leadership* topics, such as peer coaching and effective grading practices. I TEAM members are using MDC and LDC, with articles from Harvey Daniels' *Texts and Lessons for Content Area Reading* to jumpstart student engagement, as they implement Kentucky Core Academic math and literacy standards literacy lessons across content areas.

Each monthly I Team meeting is designed to introduce and model for team members a research-based teaching strategy. Teachers use the strategy in their classrooms, and the Effectiveness Coach models, co-teaches, observes and provides feedback. Teachers and administrators have welcomed this resource. The I TEAM also grapples with educational issues facing the district. In January, the team used the Socratic Circle method to discuss effective grading practices. Members were so engaged in the discussion that at 5:10 p.m., the coach had to tell them the PLC had already gone over time. Teachers moved the conversation to the parking lot and kept talking! On the way out, one teacher said, "I wish every meeting we went to was like this, where we sit together as professionals and think about how to solve problems."

Some of the I TEAM teachers chose to work together one day during Christmas break, so they could have time to collaborate on FALs and template tasks. When the math teachers tried out their FAL on the rest of the group, they discovered that some of the ELA teachers gave them a real sense of the misconceptions they can expect from their students. Lesia Eldridge, principal of Simons Middle School, developed a writing task and instructional ladder during this work day, and once school resumed, she modeled the unit in Angie McNabb's classroom. Student engagement peaked as they explored the effects of video gaming on young people and as they got a glimpse of their principal as teacher. Eldridge also represented Fleming County at the Cross State Collaborative in Denver in February; she shared the focus

(cont. on pg. 5)

Integration (cont. from pg. 4)

on integration and communication with the DNLIT in early March, and she is eager to try out with our administrative team the Problem-Based Consultancy protocol she experienced there.

In February, several of the I TEAM teachers, along with ten other teachers drawn from all grade levels and content areas, received training in the Professional Growth and Effectiveness System field test and are now field-testing three components: Self-Reflection, Professional Growth Plan and Student Voice. Conversations with their administrators are rich and reflective; they will have much to offer in the refinement of the process.

Working with the I TEAM over the last two months, the Effectiveness Coach has rolled out the LDC training with all high school teachers, who are in turn developing their first template task.

The DNLIT and I TEAM teachers and administrators are in the thick of planning next steps, which will include three days of district-wide professional development and five days for team members to “replicate themselves,” as each invites a colleague to join them in the development and refinement of MDC and LDC strategies and begin the process of strategically placing them vertically and horizontally into curriculum maps. This is just one of the steps Fleming County is taking to build capacity in the district. According to Project Manager Joy Gooding, “We are confident that our work with the Integration Project is the glue that is going to hold our implementation of Unbridled Learning together and help us reach the goal of having our students college and career ready.”



Fleming County Algebra I students engage in formative assessment on the learning target for the day.

Important Upcoming Dates

February and March continue site visits from KDE to districts

April 16 Cross-State Collaborative Mtg. Follow-up, 9:30-noon ET, Embassy Suites, Lexington

April 16-17 MDC Training, Embassy Suites, Lexington

April 19-20 LDC Training, Embassy Suites, Lexington

June 4 Prichard Showcase, Embassy Suites, Lexington

June 5 Continuation and Integration Grants Convening, Embassy Suites, Lexington

June 19-20 Gates Foundation Group Genius National Convening, Atlanta

Next Steps for April Training

LDC - Teachers need to:

- design and implement an LDC module
- collect, copy and analyze student work
- review and submit modules and student work from 1st module
- bring curriculum maps/plans for planning module placement and vertical alignment

MDC - Teachers need to:

- implement a FAL
- collect, copy and analyze student work
- continue videotaping and analyzing lessons
- bring curriculum maps/plans for planning module placement and vertical alignment

For resources used in the teacher trainings, visit [this page](#).

To share ideas and strategies, contact your fellow District Project Managers:

Daviess Co. – Janabeth Francis

Fleming Co. – Joy Gooding

Gallatin Co. – Dorothy Perkins

Jackson Ind. – Susan Watts

Jefferson Co. – Lynne Wheat

Jessamine Co. – Jimmy Adams

Kenton Co. – Barb Martin

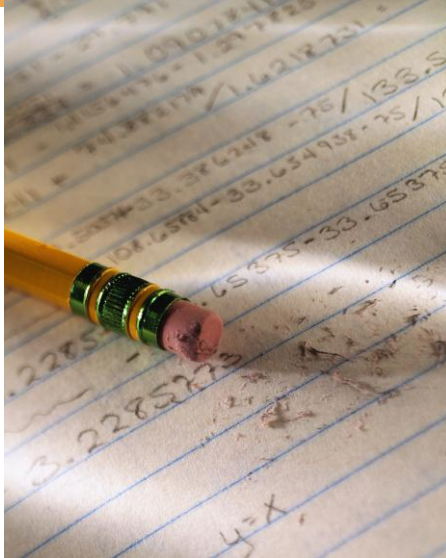
Lee Co. – Connie Smith

Magoffin Co. – Bernadette Carpenter

Owen Co. – Danny Osborne

Simpson Co. – Shelina Smith

Washington Co. – Cherry Boyles



Kentucky MDC: A Teaching and Learning Community

In November, when the Math Design Collaborative (MDC) Integration grant teachers met for their initial training, district-to-district they were strangers. Ann Shannon, the Gates leader/trainer for Kentucky's MDC work, led the session. With the exception of the Jessamine County teachers who began training with Shannon in 2010, the participants had never implemented formative assessment lessons (FALs).

Fast-forward to mid-February, where the training session opened with teachers from the Integration districts sharing presentations about the FALs they had implemented recently. As those presentations and the ensuing discussions unfolded, a transformation occurred. What began in November as groups of strangers evolved into a community of learners.

As teachers presented, they reflected on their practice, shared successes and challenges, and supported each other through shared problem-solving. Reflecting as they spoke, the MDC teachers shared several insights about their practices.

- 1.) While 'scores' didn't always show significant gains from the one-day FALs, teachers consistently reported improvement in student reasoning - an important outcome.
- 2.) Students' ability to apply a concept improved.
- 3.) Student engagement, especially students explaining their thinking to others, changed. That change was particularly significant for struggling students.

(cont. on pg.8)

Kentucky MDC (cont. from pg. 7)

- 4.) As students worked through the problem-solving process, teachers reported that student confidence improved.
- 5.) Seeing themselves on video, teachers reflected on their own practices and how that impacted what students were able to do.

Jeff Coots, from Jackson Independent, presented first. As he presented, his reflection was typical of others who followed him those two days. Coots said, "When I watched myself and my students, I could see the impact of my questions and of my interactions with them. That's when I realized that students sometimes need to think out loud." Coots continued by explaining that hearing his students articulate their thinking allowed him to pinpoint their misconceptions and pose a formative question to move student thinking and learning forward.

Teacher self-reflection, like Coots', was typical during their two days together. That reflection was a direct, intended outcome of the FAL process. As Ann Shannon explained, "FALs create an opportunity for teachers to learn." She added, "Don't worry about 'fixing' the kids." Instead, she urged teachers to worry about 'fixing' their own instruction based on what they learn about students' misconceptions.

Hearing others talk about challenges they encountered helped the rest of the teachers because they realized the challenges they experienced were shared by their peers. As those conversations unfolded, the Jessamine County teachers offered reassurance and shared how they had solved similar problems they encountered implementing FALs. The discussions also lead to teacher insights, like this one from Andrew Oliver, a Magoffin County teacher. "Sometimes implementing the lesson revealed the problem tripping up my students." Oliver indicated that those insights into student misconceptions helped him adjust his instruction.

In addition, Shannon modeled some possible responses to a typical student question. Students are conditioned to ask, "Is this right?" Shannon suggested one possible teacher response might be, "Can you tell me why it is right?" She also shared a sample response to that can jump-start the thinking for struggling students who lack confidence. When a student asks if the answer is correct, the teacher could say, "It looks brilliant to me. Can you explain why I might think that?" Another strategy she suggested was finding a correct answer the student has and asking the student to explain that answer. This strategy, Shannon explained, builds confidence, and it often leads to more insights and clarity for students because they are explaining their own thinking. It also may allow the teacher to identify possible misconceptions and respond with a different formative question to move the learner forward.

From problem-solving, the discussion moved to a focus on the evidence of Dylan William's *Five Effective Formative Assessment Strategies* teachers use when implementing FALs. The list below reflects the collective thinking from this new learning community as they considered where the five strategies are applied in formative assessment lessons.

(cont. on pg. 9)

Kentucky MDC (cont. from pg. 8)

Clarifying Learning Intentions and Sharing Criteria for Success

- * framing the lesson
- * introducing the collaborative activity
- * identifying misconceptions through the pre-assessment

Engineering Effective Classroom Discussions

- * engaging students in the collaborative activity
- * closing the lesson with whole class discussion

Providing Feedback That Moves Learners Forward

- * challenging student thinking with feedback questions
- * questioning during the collaborative activity
- * closing the lesson with the whole class discussion

Activating Students as the Owners of Their Own Learning

- * engaging students in the collaborative activity
- * involving students in the ending whole class discussion

Activating Student Learning as Instructional Resources for One Another

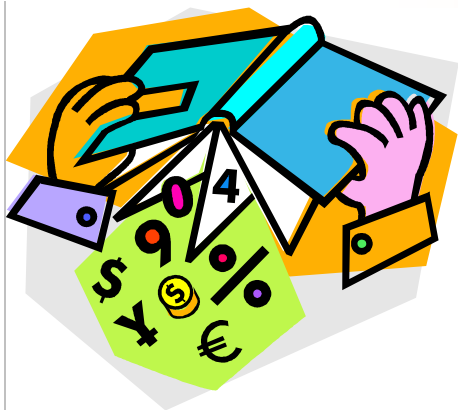
- * beginning with the pre-test
- * engaging students in the collaborative activity
- * moving student thinking forward with questioning during the activity and with feedback questions
- * giving students the chance to come up with their own questions during the FAL
- * administering the post-test and analyzing the results

At the end of the two-day session, teachers shared what they felt were positive outcomes they already noticed after using the five strategies to implement FALS.

They reported:

- improvement in their students' ability to reason
- greater student engagement
- increased student problem-solving confidence

In terms of their own growth, teachers in this new cross-district community of learners came to the collective conclusion that, with practice using the five strategies as they implement FALS, they will continue to improve their own instruction.



Integrated Strategy Team

Effectiveness Coaches:

Carol Franks
Lori Hollen
Larry Murphy
Monica Osborne
Neely Traylor
Rebecca Woosley

Project Manager:

Cindy Parker

Division of Next-Generation Professionals:

Michael Dailey, Director

Office of Next-Generation Learners:

Felicia C. Smith, Associate Commissioner

